

Clarke CSD/EA

2007-2008
CEO: 652
SECTOR: 1

IN THE MATTER OF ARBITRATION

BETWEEN

CLARKE COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

AND

CLARKE COMMUNITY EDUCATIONAL
ASSOCIATION

OPINION AND

AWARD

CLARKE CSD/EA

CEO #652/1

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Procedures:

The undersigned was selected as Arbitrator in this matter through the procedures of the Iowa Public Employment Relations Board. A Hearing was held in this matter on May 29, 2008 in Osceola, Iowa commencing at 4:30 P.M.

Parties:

The Clarke Education Association is the certified employee organization for the professional instructional employees, including part-time staff, in the Clarke Community School District. As the certified sole exclusive bargaining representative, the EA represents 110 professionals who currently occupy 95 regular program positions. The balance is paid from special education funds, Federal money or special grants.

The Clarke Community School District Administration office is located in Osceola, Iowa, forty miles south of Des Moines. The District covers 269 square miles in central Iowa and also includes the incorporated communities of Van Wert, Weldon and Woodburn. The district is located in parts of Decatur and Lucas counties, but mainly within Clarke County.

The district has 1335 students for an enrollment rank of 83 out of 364 Iowa school districts. The K-12 student population is housed in two attendance centers. The District employs a full-time superintendent and four building principals.

PERA Impasse Criteria

Section 20.22 (3) of the Code of Iowa restricts awards of arbitrators considering teacher contracts to the "... final offers on each impasse item submitted by the parties. . ."

Sections 20.22 (9) and 20.22 (11) of the Code require the arbitrator to select the most reasonable offer on the impasse item submitted by the parties after considering, in addition to any other relevant factors, the following:

- a. Past collective bargaining contracts between the parties including the bargaining that led up to such contracts.
- b. Comparison of wages, hours and conditions of employment of the involved public employees with those of other public employees doing comparable work, giving consideration to factors peculiar to the area and the classification involved.
- c. The interests and welfare of the public, the ability of the public employer to finance economic adjustments and the effect of such adjustments on the normal standard of services.
- d. The power of the public employer to levy taxes and appropriate funds for the conduct of its operation.

Final Offer Comparison:

ISSUE	ASSOCIATION PROPOSAL	DISTRICT PROPOSAL
	Total Package 4.84%	Total Package 4.50%
Salary Schedule Page 17	Increase Base by \$1000 To \$28,355	Increase Base by \$890 To \$28,245

Issue:

The sole issue is what shall be the initial B.A. base in the salary schedule, Article 19 of the Agreement. All other changes are automatic.

Discussion:

While the Association stresses the need to be competitive in a teacher market extending to Des Moines, the Arbitrator's assessment is that the District's comparisons are more persuasive. The Association's comparisons (Exhibit C7), while showing Clarke CSD in the middle of the chart, have an extreme range: sixth largest is Waukee (approximately 5500 students); sixth smallest is Moravia (approximately 300 students).

Having said this, part of P.E.R.A. Criterion 3—“interests and welfare of the public”—should be discussed. As can be seen in Association Exhibit D1, achievement proficiencies of Clarke CSD students decline as they age. In fourth grade, they are clearly above the average for Iowa; by eighth grade they are still above the average, but not so far. By eleventh grade, they are below the state average in both reading and math. This may have something to do with the fact that Clarke CSD appears to attract better teachers (rank: 193 of 364 Iowa CSD's), but has trouble retaining them (rank: 270 of 364). This in turn may be associated with a loss of competitiveness in Clarke CFD salary schedule with length of service (Association Exhibit C7). Neither Association nor District proposals would significantly address this issue.

The relatively high District health contribution (\$7200) shown in District Exhibit 7 may also be a part of the better attraction/poorer retention pattern.

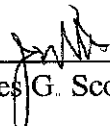
RPI

Finally it is noted that the Regular Program Increase monies from the state are generally associated with latitude for pay increases. At the District's proposed 4.5% increase, the flow of RPI at 2.82% is already exceeded.

Award

The Districts proposal is awarded.

GIVEN AT MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA THIS NINETH DAY OF JUNE 2008.



James G. Scoville
Arbitrator